

W5YI

America's Oldest Ham Radio Newsletter

REPORT

Up to the minute news from the world of amateur radio, personal computing and emerging electronics. While no guarantee is made, information is from sources we believe to be reliable.

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ARRL Board Holds Annual Meeting, Votes Not to Restructure

The Board of Directors of the American Radio Relay League held their annual meeting at the Marriott Hotel in Rocky Hill, Connecticut, on Friday, January 16, and Saturday, January 17, 1998.

The meeting was called to order by ARRL President Rod Stafford, W6ROD. Division Directors and Vice Directors from around the country were in attendance. For several hours on January 16, the Board gathered under emergency lighting because of a power outage caused by an ice storm. Highlights of the Board meeting include:

- (1) On a 11-4 vote, the Board voted not to petition to the FCC to restructure the Amateur Radio license classes and to increase HF privileges for Novice and Technician Plus licensees.
- (2) The board also rejected a proposal to look into the feasibility of asking the FCC to reduce the number of license classes from five to three. Class A would have consisted of Extra and Advanced, Class B would have included General and Tech Plus, and Class C would include Technician.
- (3) The League will petition the FCC to permit additional call sign formats for special event stations.
- (4) The Board created an *International Membership* category which will be open to Amateurs who are not eligible for full membership by virtue of residence.
- (5) In view of the new RF safety rules, the Board agreed to permit "QST" advertising of antenna

performance claims derived from antenna modeling programs.

- (6) In response to repeated malicious interference and foul language complaints, an Enforcement Task Force was established to press for better rules enforcement from the FCC.
- (7) The ARRL also will ask the FCC for a declaratory ruling that affirms that any operation that conflicts with established voluntary band plans "is not good amateur practice" and would be considered a rules violation.

Here are the details from the BOD Meeting

All officers were re-elected including President: Rod Stafford, W6ROD; First Vice President: Stephen A. Mendelsohn, W2ML; Vice Presidents: Joel M. Harrison, W5ZN and Hugh A. Turnbull, W3ABC and International Affairs Vice President: Larry Price, W4RA. Executive Vice President and Secretary: David Sumner, K1ZZ, Chief Financial Officer: Barry J. Shelley, N1VXY and Treasurer: James McCobb, W1LLU were also reelected.

Four directors elected to the Executive Committee for one-year terms include: Mary Lou Brown, NM7N, Northwestern Division; Frank M. Butler, W4RH, Southeastern Division; Kay C. Craigie, WT3P, Atlantic Division and Fried Heyn, WA6WZO, Southwestern Division. Edmond A. Metzger, W9PRN, Central Division, Frank M. Butler, W4RH, and Mrs. Helen Grauer, N0BCI were elected Directors of the ARRL Foundation for three year terms.

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Activity Reports from the Officers

President Rod Stafford highlighted membership activity and recruitment strategies; the need for greater FCC enforcement of the amateur service rules; his proposal for the creation of a steering committee to renew organizational strategic planning; fund raising; spectrum protection; and financial matters.

First Vice President Steve Mendelsohn discussed his trip to the IARU Region 3 Conference, Beijing, China, in support of ARRL objectives. Vice President Harrison commented on his attendance at the Phase 3D Program Board meeting in Orlando, Florida, August 30, 1997 and discussed launch delays and future launch plans for the project.

Vice President Hugh Turnbull addressed assignments on the Volunteer Resources Committee, Repeater Coordination Committee and his chairmanship of the RFI Task Group. Mr. Turnbull's report also covered his concerns regarding membership growth; enforcement of the amateur service rules; international and domestic advocacy; and member perceptions of ARRL.

International Affairs Vice President Larry Price supplemented his written report with extensive comments on IARU and ARRL delegations to, and the results of, significant international meetings including the IARU Region 3 Conference, Beijing, China, and the World Radiocommunication Conference, Geneva, Switzerland. Mr. Price discussed the successes, and the significant challenges that remain in the aftermath of the conferences, especially those posed by the Earth Exploration-Satellite Service at 70 cm.

Mr. Price also commented on plans for the station at ITU Headquarters (4U1ITU), sponsored by the International Amateur Radio Club. Mr. Price concluded his report, by talking about HF issues stemming from WRC-97; concerns on future funding of ITU operation; and the docket of international meetings slated for this year. In response to questions, Mr. Price discussed IARU funding; the status of the little LEO matter; increased private sector activity at ITU meetings; and future consideration of Article S25 of the radio regulations.

Jim McCobb, as Treasurer, reported on the performance and makeup of the League's investment portfolio, noting that it had outperformed major market indices in the second half of 1997. Mr. McCobb discussed recent investment decisions in the face of troubled Asian markets; the activity of the stock and bond markets for the second half of the year, highlighting the large gains in the values of common stocks, and examined investment challenges that lie ahead.

Chief Financial Officer Barry Shelley referred to his written report and discussed the organization's financial picture. Following a \$700,000 loss in 1996, ARRL posted revenue of approximately \$400,000 over expenses for 1997. Mr. Shelley explained the reasons for

the significant improvement, especially the July 1 dues increase; substantial member support of the Defense of Amateur Radio Frequencies fund, offsetting some advocacy costs; and containment of Headquarters operating expenses. Mr. Shelley also addressed plans for renovation of the lobby of the Headquarters building.

Executive Vice President Dave Sumner introduced his extensive written report by calling the Board's attention to an appendix containing a staff report and recommendations regarding advertising policy on antenna performance claims. Following discussion, it was voted that the advertising policy with regard to antenna gain is amended to permit the advertising of performance claims derived from antenna modeling programs, subject to the conditions described in the report of the Executive Vice President.

General Counsel Chris Imlay supplemented his extensive written report with comments on general legal matters; FCC matters, including reorganization of the agency's headquarters staff under Chairman Kennard's new administration; domestic spectrum issues, especially with regard to the 24 GHz band; and information that has come to light in the context of the Board's mandate to promote greater compliance with voluntary band plans. Mr. Imlay concluded his report with a review of the status of ARRL petitions for rulemaking dealing with FCC enforcement processes, and medical waivers for Morse code examination elements.

Legislative and Public Affairs Manager Steve Mansfield, N1MZA characterized the climate on Capitol Hill in anticipation of the new session, and briefly discussed telecommunications bills on tap for 1998. Mr. Mansfield reviewed 1997 congressional activity in the context of the ARRL's legislative agenda, especially measures proposing limitations on scanners; legislation affecting the siting of cellular and PCS towers; a bill proposing localization of CB radio enforcement authority; and a bill passed into law for volunteer liability protection.

Technical Relations Manager Paul Rinaldo, W4RI commented on technical regulatory affairs and efforts to minimize the possible impact of the institution of wind profiler radar systems on Amateur Radio, especially to the weak-signal segment and satellite subband on the 70 cm band. Mr. Rinaldo also discussed the little LEO issue and the fact that the issue will be on the agenda of the next World Radiocommunication Conference. Mr. Rinaldo commended the ARRL Laboratory staff for its technical study in connection with the little LEO issue, which showed how difficult it would be to introduce little LEOs as sharing partners with the amateur and amateur-satellite services. He concluded his report with brief remarks on progress toward having the United States admitted as a participant in the CEPT Recommendation T/R 61-01 arrangements for operating privileges for temporary visitors to European countries,

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and Washington office staffing.

Membership Services Committee chairman Lew Gordon, K4VX (Midwest Division Director) conveyed the results of the committee meeting held the previous day, especially relating to proposals for modifications to the new DXCC fee schedule, and a pilot for a microwave EME contest.

Volunteer Resources Committee chairman Tom Frenaye, K1KI (New England Division Director) announced that the committee would be presenting motions addressing the Public Service Advisory Committee, International Humanitarian Award, and a standard operating procedure for receiving and considering proposals for changes to boundaries of the administrative sections. Open issues include funding for the new Technical Awards System.

Administration and Finance Committee chairman Tod Olson, K0TO (Dakota Division Director) discussed the improved financial performance (revenues and expenses) of the League over the course of the previous year. Mr. Olson also commented on enhancements to the financial planning process, especially the incorporation of standing committee input...and the functions of the Treasurer, relating to investment decisions. It was voted that the 1998 Spending, Revenue, and Capital Plans are approved as presented. The Board also held a private meeting to consider personnel matters.

Computer Committee chairman Stephen A. Mendelsohn, W2ML, (First Vice President) discussed the status of the computer conversion at Headquarters; ARRL web site; the so-called "Year 2000" problem; electronic membership data media; a possible new ARRL domain name for e-mail applications and use by members; possible additional sub-domain names for Divisions and administrative sections; and upgrading of the existing remote e-mail system.

RFI Task Group chairman Hugh A. Turnbull, W3ABC (Vice President) covered the need for RFI committees in local clubs; his participation in meetings of the Accredited Standards Committee C63 which addresses electromagnetic compatibility issues in the marketplace; and C63 sub-committee structure and functions. A new consumer pamphlet was developed jointly with the Consumer Electronic Manufacturer's Association (CEMA).

RF Safety Committee chairman Jim Maxwell, W6CF (Pacific Division Vice Director) presented a written report on recent research results; a review of FCC document OET Bulletin 65 (Supplement B) on the topic of new RF safety standards; and a new ARRL publication devoted to the subject of RF exposure. Two new members were appointed, and the committee continues to work well.

Public Relations Committee Art Goddard, W6XD (Southwestern Division Vice Director) presented a

report noting the appointment of new members; several committee recommendations to enhance the League's public relations program; and a possible meeting of public information appointees at the Dayton Hamvention this year.

Future Systems Committee chairman Dennis Bodson, W4PWF (Roanoke Division Vice Director) presented a report which addressed implementation of the new Technical Awards System; PACTOR II as an example of amateur HF data systems development; and the need for technical corrections to Part 97 of the FCC rules concerning emission designators.

SAREX/ARISS Working Group chairman Joel M. Harrison, W5ZN (Vice President) presented the report which noted the decline in the frequency of SAREX missions, with only one mission in 1997, and two planned for 1998. Amateur Radio is on the manifest for the International Space Station platform, and related work is in progress.

Industry Advisory Council chairman Walt Stinson, W0CP (Rocky Mountain Division Vice Director) presented a written report commenting on the status of the ARRL's industry standardization initiative.

1998 Plenipotentiary Conference Planning Committee chairman Tod Olson, K0TO (Dakota Division Director) presented a written report and discussed Amateur Radio participation at the ITU conference scheduled for October of this year, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Mr. Olson discussed plans to showcase Amateur Radio in a room in the Conference Center.

DXCC-2000 Committee chairman John C. Kanode, N4MM, (Roanoke Division Director) presented the written report detailing the background of the DXCC program...and discussed upcoming changes to the "country" criteria; new rules; fees; new awards; electronic applications; and field checking of QSLs. (See Page 10 this issue.) The DXCC 2000 committee was dissolved with thanks for their hard work and dedicated efforts.

Actions by the ARRL Board of Directors

The Articles of Association and By Laws were amended in order to create the new membership category of "International Member." They are defined as "Any person who is the holder of an unexpired Amateur Radio operator's license or its equivalent issued by any administration, but who is not eligible for Full Membership by virtue of his place of residence..."

It was voted to rename the Technical Excellence Award to the "Doug DeMaw Technical Excellence Award."

It was also voted the General Counsel would petition the FCC to amend §97.3(a)(11)(iii) of the Commission's Rules to include in the definition of special event call signs, call signs denoting locations having no mailing address. The use of these call signs is to be limited

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to locations corresponding to the call sign.

It was voted that the General Counsel petition the FCC to amend §2.302 of the Commission's Rules to permit the use of call signs in the following additional formats to be used in the Amateur Radio Service, and to amend §97.3(a)(11)(iii) to permit their use in the special event call sign program: 1 letter, 1 digit, the letter X; 1 letter, 2 digits, 1 letter; the letter N, 2 digits, 2 letters; and 1 letter, 2 digits, 3 letters.

The following resolution was adopted:

WHEREAS, Amateur Radio Direction Finding (ARDF) has developed into a popular international program, involving people of all ages in a healthy combination of outdoor physical activity and technical endeavor; and

WHEREAS, IARU Regions 1 and 3 actively support ARDF and Region 2 has taken preliminary steps to do the same, which will make ARDF a worldwide activity; and

WHEREAS, there is evidence of growing interest among ARRL members in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the ARRL Board of Directors is committed to developing Amateur Radio programs that will give young people greater opportunities for involvement;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the President is authorized to appoint a volunteer ARRL ARDF Coordinator. The ARDF Coordinator shall be responsible for promoting ARDF in the United States in concert with the IARU regional organizations and member societies in Region 2 and other parts of the world, and shall submit a written progress report to the Board prior to each regular meeting of the Board.

The following resolution was adopted:

WHEREAS, the ARRL recognizes that APRS and SAREX /ARISS are vital and exciting facets of Amateur Radio; and

WHEREAS, the ARRL recognizes the unique needs of APRS and SAREX/ARISS for nationwide frequencies; and

WHEREAS, the ARRL supports the experimentation of APRS through various Amateur Radio satellites and the International Space Station; and

WHEREAS, TAPR and AMSAT-NA have endorsed the APRS/Manned Space alliance and the "APRS QSY Activity" and have each pledged up to \$500 to the "APRS QSY Donation Pool;"

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the ARRL endorses the concept of an APRS/Manned Space compromise as a mechanism to share frequencies in the crowded two-meter band to minimize interference. Moreover, the ARRL pledges a donation of up to \$500 to support the APRS QSY initiatives once the fund is established.

The following resolution was adopted:

WHEREAS, at its July 1997 meeting the Board of Directors authorized the President to appoint an exploratory committee to determine the best way for the ARRL to pursue the development of endowment funds in support of certain essential ARRL activities; and

WHEREAS, Vice Director Bernie Fuller, N3EFN, working as an efficient "committee of one," provided a report that the Executive Committee has recommended to the Board as the basis for further planning; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Fuller's report recommends the creation of a group of influential Amateur Radio leaders who are strong supporters of the ARRL, to be called The President's Round-

table, to serve as the focal point for this activity;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the President is authorized to appoint up to 15 members to The President's Roundtable, consistent with Mr. Fuller's report; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that responsibility for directing and coordinating all fund raising activity for the ARRL, including the eventual hiring of a Development Manager in consultation with The Roundtable and the launching, at an early date, of a vigorous program of education on planned/deferred giving, is assigned to the Chief Financial Officer; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Administration and Finance Committee is directed to monitor, and to report regularly to the Board, regarding the implementation of this resolution.

New business before the Board

Dakota Division Director Tod Olson, K0TO discussed the League's electronic publications program, and his proposals for possible projects for the future. Mr. Olson also discussed his perception of the need to obtain e-mail addresses of members to enhance organizational communication.

The Board of Directors established an **Enforcement Task Force** to explore ways to obtain increased enforcement of the Amateur Rules by the FCC and to make recommendations to the Board. Appointed to the Enforcement Task Force were Vice President Harrison, Chairman; Directors Craigie, Falcone, Fallon, Heyn, and Quiat; Vice President Turnbull; General Counsel Imlay; and Field Services Manager Palm. The Enforcement Task Force will also have oversight supervision over the operation of the Amateur Auxiliary for the purpose of reviewing the operation and work of the Amateur Auxiliary.

ARRL Board Decides Against License Restructuring

In January 1996, the ARRL's Board of Directors voted to establish a committee to address the WRC-99 Amateur Service agenda item and to conduct an opinion survey of amateurs. The ARRL's WRC-99 Planning Committee was appointed the following month. It consisted primarily of high level ARRL officials. (Six of the nine members included two Vice Presidents, three Division Directors and a Vice Director.)

The survey, completed by an independent research company, was heavily weighted in favor of getting ARRL membership opinions - rather than those from the general amateur population. The sampling consisted of polling 1100 ARRL members and 427 non-members. The response rate was 77% ...or 1176 responses.

The findings were totally predictable. Amateurs who had passed a telegraphy examination overwhelmingly wanted the requirement to remain. Both ARRL members and especially non-members who had not passed a code test opposed retention.

Amateur Extra Class operators who had passed all telegraphy tests - including the high speed 20 words-per-minute - exam were particularly adamant in their opinion that the requirement should remain. Interestingly, three-quarters of the respondents said they rarely or

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never use Morse code. Most respondents also felt there were too many license classes. Based on the results of the opinion survey, the ARRL WRC-99 Planning Committee recommended in December that the Morse code requirement for HF operation remain in place. On January 17, 1997 the ARRL Board predictably agreed with the Committee's finding.

The surprise was that the WRC-99 Committee also recommended that the U.S. amateur service be restructured. Basically, they proposed that the present Novice class be eliminated and Novice licensees given the opportunity to take an open book test to upgrade to what is now the Technician Plus license.

The present Technician class license would be renamed the Basic license, and the present Technician Plus license would be called the Intermediate license. And every license class above the Basic class would obtain additional phone frequency privileges.

The biggest change was to take place at the Intermediate Class level with additional CW privileges and phone privileges on 160, 80, 15 and 10 meters. The General Class code would be reduced to 10 words-per-minute. All telegraphy examinations had to be passed using a one minute solid copy format which would include a sending test.

The ARRL Board accepted the report and asked the membership to comment on the planning committee's proposal prior to May 31, 1997 so that they could vote on the matter at their July Board meeting. The response from the membership was varied and sometimes volatile.

No action, however, was taken at the July 18-19, 1997 ARRL Board meeting "since no clear consensus had emerged" on restructuring of the Amateur Service. The Board voted to extend the period for member comments and revisit the issue later.

The ARRL agreed to vote on Amateur Service restructuring at the January 1998 annual meeting. The Board's plan for restructuring turned out to be somewhat different than what the Planning Committee first proposed. A roll call vote taken on the following resolution.

Resolution to Restructure the U.S. Amateur Service

WHEREAS, at the request of the Board the WRC-99 Planning Committee studied and reported on various concepts for simplification of the Amateur Radio Service licensing structure and increased HF privileges for Novice and Technician Plus licensees; and

WHEREAS, the committee report was presented to the Board at its 1997 meeting and at the instruction of the Board was printed in March 1997 QST; and

WHEREAS, members were invited to comment to their Directors; and

WHEREAS, at its Second 1997 Meeting the Board extended the period for comment and resolved to reexamine the issue at a later date;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors instructs the General Counsel to draft, but not to file prior to final approval at the July 1998 Board Meeting, a petition for FCC rule making incorporating the following principles:

1. No changes in Morse code testing would be proposed.
2. No new Novice licenses would be issued after the effective date of new rules, but existing licenses would be renewable, with present VHF/UHF privileges and CW HF privileges similar to those of Technician Plus.
3. (a) Anyone holding a Technician license issued before the effective date of new rules would be able to upgrade to Technician Plus on passing a 5-wpm code test.
(b) Anyone issued a Technician license after the effective date of new rules, since they will have passed a written examination dealing only with VHF, would have to pass a new written exam oriented toward HF as well as a 5-wpm code test.
(c) Novice licensees wishing to upgrade would receive credit for the 5-wpm code test but would be required to pass the new written examinations for the classes of license being sought.
4. The current HF CW frequency allocations for Technician Plus (and Novice) licenses would be reallocated to provide expanded HF phone frequencies for General, Advanced, Extra and Technician Plus licensees.
(a) Expand the existing HF phone bands as follows:

General Class	3800 - 4000
Advanced Class	3725 - 4000
Extra Class	3700 - 4000
Technician Plus	3925 - 4000
General Class	7200 - 7300
Advanced Class	7125 - 7300
Extra Class	7125 - 7300
Technician Plus	21350 - 21450
General Class	21250 - 21450
Advanced Class	21175 - 21450
Extra Class	21150 - 21450

No change to 160, 20, 17, 12, 10 meters.

(b) Allocate CW HF privileges for Technician Plus (and Novice) as follows:

80 meters	3550 - 3700
40 meters	7025 - 7050
15 meters	21050 - 21100
10 meters	28050 - 28300

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that members are to be advised of the Board's intention to authorize the filing of this petition at the 1998 Second Meeting of the Board, and are to be invited to offer additional comment on the merits of the proposals contained therein.

The Board voted **NOT** to adopt that resolution. It was then moved by West Gulf Division Director Jim Haynie, W5JBP, seconded by Mr. Olson, that the Executive Committee study the filing of a petition with the FCC to implement a restructuring of the five license classes to three; the three classes being class A, B, and C. Class A will consist of Extra and Advanced. Class B: General and Technician Plus and Class C: Technician.

A roll call vote was requested, with ten Directors voting against the motion. Directors Metzger, Frenaye, Butler, Heyn, and Haynie voted for the motion. So that version of restructuring also was defeated ...or at least precluded from further consideration.

Strangely, however, the ARRL put out the word in one of the bulletins that the Class A, B and C restructuring version would be further studied - and amateurs

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began contemplating that the General Class code might go to 5 wpm and Extra to 13. The League later corrected that error.

Rejection of these plans completes the Board's consideration of its WRC-99 Planning Committee proposal. At this point, the ARRL is no longer considering any type of license class restructuring.

NYC Taxicabs using 10 meter ham band.

The ARRL Board adopted the following resolution:

WHEREAS, for a number of years, many New York City taxi cabs have used illegally modified Citizen Band radios to operate without amateur licenses on the 10 meter amateur radio band; and

WHEREAS, this has been a long term problem to which the FCC has devoted insufficient enforcement resources; and

WHEREAS, this action has led to a proliferation of this illegal activity; and

WHEREAS, for many years, the Taxi and Limousine Commission of New York City has allowed this practice to continue; and

WHEREAS, in recent weeks, due to the efforts of an ARRL Hudson Division Ad-Hoc Committee, there has been co-operation between the FCC CIB inspectors and the TLC Inspection Station in New York City (Astoria, Queens) to address and resolve the illegal radio operation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the ARRL Board applauds this action; urges continuation of the effort; and urges confiscation of equipment and issuance of fines to those drivers who do not comply, with followup street inspections to insure compliance over a period of months; and eventual removal of all illegal transmitters from the New York City cabs. The Board requests that the Hudson Division Director report to the Board at its July meeting on the continuing enforcement effort and thanks the FCC CIB inspectors, and TLC officials and inspectors for their cooperation with the Hudson Division ad hoc committee which brought this effort about.

The following resolution was adopted:

WHEREAS, upon review of ... the July, 1997 Board Meeting, and the research of the matter by the staff since that date, the Board is convinced that there exists citable Commission precedent, issued under delegated authority, holding that, in view of widespread acceptance of the League's band plans and established local and regional variations thereon, any amateur who selects a station transmitting frequency not in harmony with those plans is not operating in accord with good amateur practice; and

WHEREAS, due to the passage of time since the creation of that precedent and the desirability of a more formal statement thereof, the policy requires reaffirmation; and

WHEREAS, operation outside the established international, national, regional or local band plans, (to the extent that such operation causes interference or some other adverse effect) cannot constitute good amateur practice, and thus is not in accordance with §97.101(a) of the Commission's Rules;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that staff and the General Counsel are directed, without delay, to seek a declaratory ruling from the Commission, pursuant to §1.2 of the Commission's Rules, affirming that operation on frequencies, or with emissions, in conflict with established, voluntary band plans, to the extent that such operation causes interference or other adverse effect relative to other users operating in accordance with applicable band plans, is not good amateur practice,

and thus is not in compliance with §97.101(a) of the Commission's Rules.

The following resolution was adopted:

WHEREAS, experience has shown that specific public service matters to be brought to the attention of the Board should be considered by an ad hoc committee created expressly for the purpose of addressing the specific issue at hand; and

WHEREAS, over the years, the members of the Public Service Advisory Committee have served with distinction in addressing the limited docket of issues that have been referred to the committee by the Board;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as future public service issues arise, they shall be referred to, and considered by, specialized ad hoc committees created by the Board specifically to address them. The members of the Public Service Advisory Committee, having served with dedication, are discharged with the deepest thanks and appreciation of the Board.

The following resolution was adopted:

WHEREAS, the ARRL believes that individuals wanting to become licensed amateur radio operators should be able to easily find resources to accomplish that goal; and

WHEREAS, the ARRL encourages all amateur radio operators to be active on the air, in local and regional clubs, and in the ARRL; and

WHEREAS, an active, on-the-air amateur is more likely to be a lifetime participant in amateur radio activities;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Volunteer Resources Committee is directed to study the "Email Elmer" project in the Great Lakes Division and the "Get on the Air" projects in the New England Division and make recommendations for establishing a national program which incorporates the benefits of these projects plus other features which would enhance accomplishing the aforementioned objectives.

The ARRL Board voted to require the election committee to work with League staff to immediately develop instructions to accompany Section Manager recall ballots explaining the procedures which are to be followed if a recall is successful.

A motion was made that ARRL file a petition for rule making with the FCC, providing formerly licensed amateur radio operators with the opportunity of having their former renewable licenses restored upon petition to FCC, subject to passing an examination on current laws and regulations only. It was decided to refer the matter to the Executive Committee.

Mr. Olson notified the Board that he will not run for re-election in 1999. He went on to say that his reason for making this announcement was to provide sufficient time for persons within the Division to identify and support the person they wish to have replace him as Director in the year 2000. He pointed out that he felt that it was imperative that there be periodic change in the representation of a Division to assure that fresh ideas are presented to and considered by the Board.

The ARRL Board voted to recognize and thank Directors Metzger and Butler for their 40 years of service as elected officials of ARRL.

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AMATEUR RADIO STATION CALL SIGNS:

...sequentially issued as of the first of February 1998:

Radio District	Group A Extra	Group B Advanced	Group C Tech/Gen.	Group D Novice
0 (*)	AB0HF	KI0LO	(***)	KC0CRE
1 (*)	AA1TE	KE1JE	(***)	KB1CIT
2 (*)	AB2EX	KG2NO	(***)	KC2CYG
3 (*)	AA3QT	KF3AW	(***)	KB3CBT
4 (*)	AF4HV	KU4OF	(***)	KF4VRS
5 (*)	AC5OX	KM5OU	(***)	KD5DFM
6 (*)	AD6EJ	KQ6UM	(***)	KF6PIH
7 (*)	AB7XF	KK7LT	(***)	KD7AKT
8 (*)	AB8BV	KI8FA	(***)	KC8JFS
9 (*)	AA9VR	KG9MI	(***)	KB9SAJ
N. Mariana	NH0B	AH0AY	KH0GV	WH0ABI
Guam	(**)	AH2DF	KH2TA	WH2ANV
Hawaii	KH7W	AH6PF	KH7IN	WH6DEN
Am.Samoa	AH8P	AH8AH	KH8DL	WH8ABF
Alaska	AL0H	AL7QY	KL0LN	WL7CUQ
Virgin Isl.	(**)	KP2CM	NP2JX	WP2AIJ
Puerto Rico	NP3S	KP3BE	NP3TS	WP4NNP

* = All Group "A" 1-by-2 & 2-by-1 call signs have been assigned. (AA-AK-by-2 call signs now being issued.)

** = All 2-by-1 call signs have been assigned. (Group "B" call signs now being issued.)

*** = Group "C" (N-by-3) call signs have now run out in all call districts. (Group "D" 2-by-3 call signs now being issued.)

Note: New prefix numerals now being assigned in Puerto Rico (KP3/NP3), Hawaii (KH7/AH6) and Alaska (AL0/KL0)

[Source: FCC Amateur Service Database, Washington, DC]

NEW AND UPGRADING AMATEUR STATISTICS

For the Month of January 1996, 1997 & 1998

License Class	New Amateurs			Upgrading Amateurs		
	*1996	1997	1998	*1996	1997	1998
Novice	129	59	41	0	7	0
Technician	2704	1362	912	0	24	0
Tech Plus	271	101	78	629	268	249
General	39	26	16	556	303	260
Advanced	4	4	4	428	239	198
Extra Class	7	1	2	356	174	147
Total:	3154	1553	1053	1969	1015	854
Decrease:		(40%)	(32%)		(49%)	(16%)

* **Note:** The number of new (first time licensed) and upgrading amateurs were higher than normal during January 1996 due to the government shutdown in December 1995. Licenses for successful examinees after December 18, 1995 (which ordinarily would have been issued in December) were not issued until mid-Jan. 1996.

■ **Amateur Electronic Supply (headquartered in Milwaukee) is now under the new ownership** of Phil Majerus, a prominent Wisconsin businessman. AES was founded in 1957 by Terry Stermann, W9DIA, who became interested in ham radio while working in his dad's electronic store. The existing management team at AES remains unchanged.

■ **Ham radio operators responded quickly and effectively in the aftermath of a major ice storm** that devastated portions of Maine, New York, Vermont, and New Hampshire. President Clinton declared much of the region a Federal Disaster area. North of the border, in what has been called the biggest disaster in the history of Canada, large portions of Quebec and Ontario were buried under up to two inches of ice.

Electric service was cut to 125,000 customers in New York alone. Telephone poles and steel high tension electric towers were snapped like toothpicks under the ice loading. New York State RACES was activated and established HF operations on 7255 and 3993.5 kHz. On VHF, the Mt Equinox, Vermont repeater on 145.39 MHz was utilized to link the capital with upstate areas. In the Mohawk Valley, the National Weather Service at Albany and the State Emergency Management Office monitored river watch operations in Schenectady, Fulton, Montgomery, and Schoharie Counties on the 147.06 repeater. Albany County operations were on the 147.12 RACES/ARES repeater.

In northern New York, the FCC requested all amateurs to recognize the existence of a voluntary communications emergency and to relinquish the use of several repeater frequencies in the two meter band for the handling of emergency traffic. The FCC District Director for New York declared a voluntary communications emergency in a January 14 letter to Darryl Roberts, WN2F.

Vice President Al Gore visited the ice-storm stricken areas of Maine, where all but one of that state's 16 counties have been declared disaster areas. Telephone service remained intact over most of the state, but Maine hams responded to help out with some communication tasks as needed. Hams there monitored 146.52 simplex since many repeaters were down.

Amateurs operated from emergency shelters and government offices throughout the region providing what is, in many areas, the only form of communications. ARES and RACES groups cooperated with the American Red Cross, Salvation Army, and government agencies. Full repair to the infrastructure of electric and telephone utilities, including cellular service and the Internet, is expected to take months.

Members of the Albany Amateur Radio Association and Troy Amateur Radio Association worked together to assist the storm-stricken victims. Their collection efforts centered on non-perishable food items such as canned goods, baby food and formula, and other supplies such as flashlights and batteries, cleaning supplies, pet food, and battery-powered radios. The club also accepted checks made payable to the American Red Cross.

The Schenectady Amateur Radio Association, along with fire departments and law enforcement agencies sent generators. There were widespread reports of profiteers making volume purchases of generators in the Albany and Syracuse areas and selling them upstate at 400 and 500 percent markups. (Thanks, Stephan Anderman, K2SMA)

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CUTTING EDGE TECHNOLOGY

■ Really fast Web access (and telecommuting - working at home via your PC) over POTS (plain old telephone system) lines is coming later this year as telcos get ready to do battle with cable modems!

Everyone is buzzing about ADSL - which stands for asymmetrical digital subscriber line. The term was coined by Bellcore in 1989. If the big name players supporting this new technology is any indication, it is going to be very big! Early versions are already in test markets.

Microsoft, Compaq Computer, Intel and several regional telephone companies (GTE, Ameritech, U.S. West, BellSouth, Pacific Bell and Southwestern Bell) are banding together to support a new standard that provides Internet access at about thirty to fifty times the present speed. Together, the consortium represents more than 50% of the U.S. copper line market.

ADSL Lite permits data speeds of 1.5 megabits (downstream) per second; upstream speed is somewhat slower. The big advantage is that it is cheaper and easier to install than specialized broadband telephone lines and cable modems.

The faster speed is based on new modems - which will cost about \$200 - that operate over regular twisted-pair copper wiring. The new service will not interfere with normal voice conversations made simultaneously over the same line -- a feature that is not available to the American consumer now.

ADSL is a continuous connection and you will not have to dial in to reach your provider. That means that your telephone is free for other use even though you are using the same line to access the Web. With ADSL, broadcast quality video over the Internet could become a reality.

■ **The line between television and computing is rapidly disappearing.** Microsoft, NBC, Walt Disney Co., Intel Corp. CNN, and about two dozen other media and entertainment companies are working on an Internet standard for the design, display and delivery of interactive TV programming. The objective is to have transparent delivery of television signals to a personal computer. Microsoft has already developed software which measures viewer usage of interactive TV.

■ **Web pages delivered from your ISP.** Intel is also launching a new system of "cache servers" as an interim answer

to the World Wide Wait. "Quick Web" stores frequently accessed graphics-intensive Web pages in compressed form at the customer's Internet Service Provider rather than downloading from the Web-site. Local access "Quick Web," which will add about \$5 per month to subscriber cost, requires no special equipment attached to or software on a user's computer.

The technology effectively doubles Web downloading speed and reduces network traffic. Intel said that "Quick Web" is a short term solution ...until new high-speed networks, fiber optic lines, satellite delivery and TV set-top box infrastructure comes online.

■ **Radios newest undeveloped frontier - The millimeter wave bands (30 GHz to 300 GHz) are the largest and fastest growing portion of the radio spectrum!** The millimeter wave band gets its name from the wavelength of millimeter wave signals. (A 300 GHz radio wave has a wavelength of 1-mm.) Ninety percent of the allocated radio spectrum falls in the millimeter wave band - yet only 1% of communications takes place there. The Amateur Service is allocated six different millimeter bands: at 6, 4, 2.5, 2 and 1 mm.

COMPUTERS & HARDWARE

■ **We purchased a digital camera since our last newsletter.** A common question has been, "How did I select it?" I simply did an online search for product reviews and found that there are several ways to evaluate digital cameras (...image quality, ease-of-use, battery life, weight, user requirements, resolution, hands-on feel, storage method, ...and on and on.) So it all depends on what is important to you. Before you shell out \$500 or more, you owe it to yourself to check out the <http://www.pcphotoforum.com> Website (especially the "reviews by users" section.)

PC World (magazine, Feb. 1998 issue) rated the **Sony Mavica FD-7** as their best all around buy, so that is what we got. (Some other reviewers and magazines had different favorites.) The FD-7 takes photos right on 3 1/2-inch floppy disks in JPEG format - and is the only digital camera that can do that. Just pop the disk into your PC's floppy drive and there is the photograph. You have to "pipe" the images in through your computer's serial port with digital cameras.

It proved easier to choose the camera

than to buy it! None of the local outlets (Comp USA, Computer City, Best Buy, Circuit City, and camera stores) had it available for sale - and those that carried Sony would only take orders at the full list (\$699 now, previously \$799) price. I finally solved that problem by using a "\$50 price-off" coupon from Computer City and going on a waiting list. The camera arrived early January.

■ **High-Tech at Super Bowl XXXII** - To speed up delivery of action photographs from the Super Bowl to the world's newspapers, Associated Press photographers used digital cameras which shot photos directly on disks. The disks were quickly inserted into laptop PCs and transmitted via a wireless LAN to a trailer workroom located 500 feet away outside the stadium. After editing and processing, the finished files were then FTP transferred from San Diego to New York for uplinking. The AP had the first play of the game up on the satellite for newspaper download within five minutes of kickoff!

■ **AT&T's 41 year old business markets division VP (Jeff Weitzen)** has resigned and accepted a position as president of mail order computer seller, Gateway 2000, Inc. (Sioux City, SD). He previously was responsible for nearly half of AT&T's \$52 billion in revenue.

In 1997, Gateway shipped more than 2.5 million PCs (\$6.29 billion) - about a third more than in 1996. Gateway only sells directly to consumers.

Meanwhile, AT&T, the nation's biggest telecommunications company, has begun a corporate reorganization which could claim up to 20,000 jobs ...or 15% of their 130,000 workers. AT&T's new CEO (Michael Armstrong) was hired away from Hughes Electronics last October. His goal is to change from various separate product divisions to selling customers a complete package of telecommunications.

AT&T is also looking into making a \$1 billion investment in "@Home," a high speed consumer online service that runs over digital cable TV systems.

INTERNET NEWS

■ **An estimated \$10 million was bet via the Internet on the Super Bowl.** A gaming research analyst targeted 1998 online gambling at \$440 million and projects Internet betting will reach \$8.6 billion by the year 2000. Due to a big potential for tax money, industry insiders are

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"betting" that states and the federal government will eventually allow and regulate online gaming.

■ International Data Corporation, a major high tech research organization, has made these interesting **Ten Predictions for 1998:**

(1) The Web will surge to 100 million users and online commerce will exceed \$20 billion. Web population will exceed 200 million by 2001. (There were 28 million online in 1997; over \$50 million in 1997.)

(2) The Web will finally reach "mass market" proportions. (One household in four will be online.) "In 1998, having an ability to do business online will no longer be a luxury; it will be a necessity."

(3) Lower priced IA's - information appliances - such as WebTV, cable Internet access, Network Computers (NCs) ...and web-enabled television, screenphones, videogame consoles, personal digital assistants (PDAs), and more will (within three to five years) challenge PC unit sales. IA's and NC's will eventually outnumber PCs.

(4) PC manufacturers will bombard consumers with \$500 to \$700 PCs. "The consumer is now replacing the business user as the center of the PC universe."

(5) Intel will address the low-end PC and NC/appliance business with low cost chips targeted at the mass market.

(6) Microsoft will win the DOJ battle and could even create a new non-Windows appliance platform.

(7) The era of "megabit consumer Internet access" arrives in 1998 as telcos' digital subscriber line (DSL) challenges high-speed data over cable.

(8) ISPs' (Internet Service Provider) power will grow and become the dominant customer of networking equipment.

(9) "Key Internet technologies for 1998 will include digital certificates, thin software, Web sound, and language translation." Thin software is appliance-focused programs that account for the 20% of the code that does 80% of the work.

(10) Look for quite a few more megamergers before 1998's done" geared toward exploiting the web!

■ Shouting "fire" on the busy, crowded information highway and the e-mail equivalent of a stampede begins. **Have you recently received an e-mail notice about the "Join the Crew" computer virus?** It is making the rounds. The message reads: "Warning! If you receive an e-mail titled "Join the Crew" do NOT open it! It will erase everything on your hard

drive! This is a new virus and not many people know about it so send this letter out to everyone you can."

Another version of the message says that the virus also reads your e-mail address book and forwards everyone a copy.

IBM says it is a hoax and that it is not possible for a virus to exist in the text portion of electronic mail since all e-mail is ASCII. A virus could be carried within a file attached to a message, but it could only be spread by detaching the file and executing it or (if it contains macros) opening it with an application that could execute viral macros. IBM asks PC users to "Help prevent Internet litter" by not forwarding hoax warnings to others.

■ **Yahoo! is the most popular Internet search engine** with a stunning 50% market share. The other top three are Excite, Infoseek and Lycos. Flat rate access plans and strong (and lower price) PC sales have contributed to millions of search engine page views per day.

Yahoo! claims 50 million "hits" per day - a mass audience for sure! Advertising dollars that once went to other media are now buying ads at search engines. The result is that Yahoo's stock is up 350% over the past 12 months. It was also the first to offer free electronic mail which ensures regular return visits. Excite gets 28 million "hits" per day and its stock is up 185% in the past year. (Lycos gets 12 million; Infoseek, 10 million.)

Yahoo's goal is to present serious competition to America Online which has 11 million subscribers. AOL accounts for 58% of all time spent in cyberspace by home users. Its subscribers send some 20 million e-mail messages monthly. (A year ago, the figure was 8 million.) During peak hours, AOL has over 600,000 simultaneous users.

Yahoo! has now entered into an agreement with MCI Communications Corp. to offer "Yahoo Online." It should be available by April. Yahoo! will handle the content and sell advertising space and retain all ad revenue. MCI will handle the Internet dial-up service, billing and customer support. Yahoo! will also benefit from MCI's prime time advertising - something that no search engine can afford.

WASHINGTON WHISPERS

■ **Microsoft has reached a settlement with the Justice Department.** The government believes that the firm is

using its operating system monopoly to push its Internet Explorer browser. Microsoft will let computer makers install Windows 95 on their PCs with the browser icon deleted from the desktop. In effect, the browser will be hidden but its files will remain on the computer's hard drive. PC manufacturers will decide whether they want to show the icon on the desktop or not.

Still unanswered is the question as to whether the browser is an integral part of the operating system ...or a separate product. The 1995 consent decree says Microsoft may not tie the purchase of one product to another but can sell integrated products.

■ **The U.S. Government wants to limit the number of new top Internet level domains.** TLDs are the suffix letters in an Internet address such as .com, .org and .net. Instead of adding seven new domains, the Clinton administration wants to add only five. The Internet Policy Committee says it is going ahead with its original plan. "Ultimately, the Internet makes up its own mind." Eighty-eight new competing registrar's are scheduled to begin issuing Internet addresses with the new domain name choices in March. Internet usage - and demand for new addresses - is expected to double within two years.

■ Due to privacy concerns, the **Social Security Administration (SSA) suspended its interactive PEBES (Personal Earnings and Benefit Estimate Statements)** over the Internet on April 9, 1997. SSA now plans to once again put estimates of worker's future benefits back online. You will need the same information as before (name, date/place of birth, mother's maiden name and Social Security number) but now an e-mailed "activation number" must also be included. Benefit estimates and number of work credits earned will be included in the report but not an earnings history.

■ **Well-liked John B. Johnston, W3BE retired from the FCC on Friday, January 30.** Apparently he did not make up his mind to do so until Wednesday, January 28th. That is the day that he notified co-workers. Johnston had been with the FCC since 1974 and was Chief of the Personal Radio Branch in the Private Radio Bureau (which later became the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau) overseeing the Amateur Radio Service.

William T. Cross, W3TN of the Policy and Rules Branch, who often served as Johnny's assistant, will be filling in.

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CANADA CONSIDERS CALL SIGN SYSTEM CHANGE

Canada is looking at overhauling its Amateur Radio station call sign system. Toward that end, a committee was established called the *Call Sign Working Group*. The CSWG is a joint effort of their federal telecommunications regulatory agency, *Industry Canada*, and *Radio Amateurs of Canada*. RAC is their national ham society.

The committee has now filed its report with the *Canadian Amateur Radio Advisory Board (CARAB)*. In it, CSWG recommends that

- (1) The practice of unique call signs for each province or territory should be continued and that new blocks be added to accommodate changing circumstances.
- (2) Require amateurs who change their address to acquire a call sign representative of their new prefix area if it is different from their current one.
- (3) Allow only amateurs who have attained all four qualification certificates to apply for two letter suffix calls. Only one such two letter suffix call may be assigned to any particular individual.
- (4) The current policy of assigning four letter suffix calls on a rare exception basis for temporary events should be continued. Single letter suffix calls should only be assigned to recognized clubs and not individuals.
- (5) Do not reassign any relinquished call for twelve months after it becomes available. In the case of a call which becomes available as a result of the death of the amateur, any member of the immediate family who is qualified to hold it (i.e.: all four certificates for two letter suffix) and requests the call prior to the expiration of the twelve month period should receive it.
- (6) Do not allow the assignment of any new call signs in the QOA to QTZ range. A list of unacceptable suffixes should be developed and circulated to all issuing offices so that it may be uniformly applied.
- (7) Retain VE0 prefix for assignment to maritime mobile stations only.
- (8) Continue the practice of allowing individuals to choose any available (vanity) call sign that they are qualified for. Do not at this time open any unusual or unique prefix/suffix combinations. Study the vanity call sign gating system currently being implemented in the United States with a view to using the experience they will acquire over the next twelve months to revise this policy in the future.
- (9) Allow individuals or clubs to hold as many call signs as they are willing to pay for, as long as only one of them is a two letter suffix call and all of them represent the prefix area of the principal residence.
- (10) Where feasible, allow new amateurs to select the three letter call sign of their choice. In areas where a list cannot be supplied, allow the new amateur to submit up to three choices for a three letter suffix call sign.
- (11) Restrict the application for temporary special regional or national prefixes to recognized amateur radio clubs or organizations, not individuals.
- (12) Assign unique call signs to celebrate or commemorate special events only to recognized amateur radio clubs or organizations, not individuals. Applications for these calls should be subject to the normal annual fee and remain assigned to the applicant until the next routine

renewal cycle.

- (13.) Do not consider the permanent use of "C" (CFA-CKZ) block prefixes.

Amateurs in Canada are now asked to comment prior to February 28, 1998 on the CSWG recommendations. RAC will review all submissions before making a final recommendation for *Industry Canada's* determination.

MAJOR DX CENTURY CLUB CHANGES COMING!

Extensive changes will be taking place in the League's DXCC program. The DXCC certificate is the most sought after award in ham radio. To obtain it, you must make confirmed 2-way radio contacts with 100 "countries" on the DXCC list. The *DXCC 2000 Committee* was established by the board and charged with redefining the DX Century Club rules for the year 2000 and beyond.

Approved by the ARRL Board January 16 and 17 were rules changes for the DXCC program that had been recommended by the *DXCC 2000 Committee*. The term "country" does not necessarily agree with its common meaning. Their interim report made two key recommendations regarding DXCC country status that will primarily impact on those new hams just starting up the DX countries ladder.

The committee recommended changes to what they say are the two most flawed aspects of what determines a "countries" eligibility for DXCC credit. Under the new criteria, no countries currently on the DXCC list will be removed.

In the future, countries will be referred to as "entities." A political entity will be added to the DXCC list if it meets any one of three criteria: (1) it is a UN member state, (2) it has an ITU prefix block assigned, or (3) it has a separate IARU member society.

The new criteria also replaces all DXCC measurements, including physical separation distances, with metric system figures roughly equivalent to the former distances. While the 57 entities on the deleted list will remain, no new countries will be added to the deleted list in the future. Deleted entities simply will be removed.

In addition, the new rules specify that for an island to be considered a DXCC country it would have to have at least two points separated by not less than 100 meters of connected land above the high tide. And this would have to be proven through the use of charts of sufficient scale.

The DXCC field checking program will remain in place. The committee's interim report also recommends some changes to the DXCC award structure with two new awards added. These are the *DXCC Challenge* for total band countries on 6 down to 160 meters, but excluding 30 meters. The other is the *DXCC2000 Award* for working at least 100 countries during the year 2000. The effective date of the changes will be announced later this year.